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FINAL REVISION

15 November 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: CIA Selection Board

SUBJECT: Career Staff Selection Criteria

1. PROBLEM:

To determine criteria to be used by the Heads of Career Services, the Panel of Examiners and the CIA Selection Board in considering applications for membership in the Career Staff.

2. ASSUMPTIONS:

a. It is necessary to have selection criteria for the guidance of the Heads of Career Services, the Panels of Examiners and the CIA Selection Board to insure that equitable and uniform standards will be applied to all applicants.

b. It is necessary that the Heads of Career Services, the Panels of Examiners and the CIA Selection Board understand and utilize the same criteria so that both the recommending function of the two former and the approving function of the latter are based upon the same selection standards.

3. FACTS:

a. The Career Service Staff is currently sending applications for membership in the Career Staff to all persons who became eligible on 1 July 1954 and who have become eligible subsequent to that date.

b. Merely to work off within a year the large back-log of applications that is anticipated (in excess of 5200 were eligible on 1 July 1954), it is

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necessary for the Panels to consider an average of at least 100 cases per week. It is, therefore, imperative to agree upon selection criteria to be employed and to convene the Panels as expeditiously as possible in order to act upon the large volume of returned applications which is expected in the immediate future.

4. DISCUSSION:

a. The CIA Career Service Board and the Professional Selection Panel discussed and considered for many months various criteria that could be employed to select the most suitable persons for long-range employment in this Agency. Unanimity of opinion could not be reached. In effect, the problem has now been left to the decision of the CIA Selection Board per Regulation No. [ ] which states, in part: "The CIA Selection Board is responsible for formulating appropriate criteria for selection into the Career Staff."

b. For the immediate future, tentative selection criteria which can be employed at once are needed so that action on applications to the Career Staff can be taken without undue delay. In actual fact, certain assumptions are basic to the philosophy and procedure by which the Career Staff is being established. They are

(1) The Agency assumes that each staff employee and staff agent presently on duty is a potentially suitable member of the Career Staff.

(2) Before granting membership in the Career Staff to those persons who seek it, however, the Agency reviews the record of each candidate to insure that this assumption is correct.

(3) The Agency makes a sincere expression of intent to continue the employment and to develop the career of each employee who makes a sincere

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expression of intent to cast his lot on a long-term basis with the Agency and to devote himself to the furtherance of its mission. Therefore, the present problem is to screen out those persons who, for one reason or another, do not qualify for membership in the Career Staff. The principal responsibility of the Heads of Career Services, the Panels of Examiners and the CIA Selection Board at present is to look for negative evidence, or for disqualifying factors, rather than attempt at this time to formulate positive criteria without a more adequate research basis.

c. In the fields of security and medical considerations, professional opinion is required. The Security and Medical Offices routinely accomplish suitability determinations in their respective fields for conditions of employment. The Head of the Career Service who has questions in regard to an individual's security and/or medical performance will refer such questions to the office concerned.

d. The areas in which Heads of Career Services, Panels of Examiners and the CIA Selection Board should look for disqualifying evidence are as listed below. These are to be considered as guides rather than as hard and fast juridical criteria.

(1) Job Performance

On the basis of his prior record with the Agency and the recommendations of his current supervisors, is the job performance of the individual inadequate to the extent that he should not be offered career status?

(2) Personal Conduct

Are there any indications that the individual's on-the-job conduct (i.e. inter-personal relationships, maturity, stability, judgement, security consciousness, etc.) is deficient or would be unbecoming a member of the Career Staff? Are there indications that his off-the-job conduct is

such that it might attract unfavorable notice to himself or to the Agency?

(3) Training Record

Is there evidence of unsatisfactory performance or conduct in the individual's training record (including assessment records) which reflects adversely upon his suitability for an Agency Career?

(4) Evidences of Intent

Is there any evidence of lack of intent to remain with the Agency on a long-range basis or lack of sincerity in the individual's expressed willingness to fulfill the obligations of career service?

(5) Evidences of Inconsistency

Are there inconsistencies in the record of the individual or in the recommendations of supervisors that require clarification and might lead to evidences of unsuitability after the facts are fully developed?

e. The experience of the Career Service Board and the Professional Selection Panel would indicate that positive criteria cannot be formulated solely on the basis of the opinion of individuals, even though they are of wide experience and unquestioned sincerity and motivation. Until a system for describing the "successful" CIA employee based on research and sound psychological principles can be devised, the discussion is likely to be endless as well as futile. The new Fitness Report will help to fill this void. It is believed that research now being conducted and to be conducted in the future by various components of the Agency will be productive of a system of criteria that could be used in future years when the problem of selection into the Career Staff becomes radically altered.

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CONCLUSIONS:

a. In order to implement the selection of persons into the Career Staff, criteria acceptable to the CIA Selection Board are needed at the earliest practicable moment.

b. The criteria listed under 4 (d) above are considered workable interim standards pending completion of more exhaustive formal research.

c. Adequate research in this field must be done within CIA under the coordination of the Assistant Director for Personnel.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended

a. that the criteria listed under 4 (d) above be approved by the CIA Selection Board for use by Heads of Career Services and by the Panels of Examiners in arriving at the basis for recommendation to the CIA Selection Board as to the suitability of Career Staff applicants.

b. that the Assistant Director for Personnel be asked to coordinate the necessary research as indicated under 4 (e) above.

Executive Director  
CIA Selection Board

APPROVE

Chairman, CIA Selection Board

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